

Public moorings

Public moorings are installed at popular locations and have blue, cone-shaped buoys with a colour-coded band. This band tells you the class (vessel length) and maximum wind strength limits that apply to the mooring. Mooring specifications and conditions of use are also displayed on the mooring tag attached to the pick-up line.

Many privately-owned moorings also exist within the marine parks. You should obtain the permission of the owner before using a privately-owned mooring.

Use of moorings

When using public moorings, there are some key points to note.

- All public moorings in the Keppels and Capricorn Bunkers can be used for up to 24 hours to ensure fair and equitable use.
- All public moorings are available for overnight use.
- Public moorings must not be used by more than one vessel at a time (tenders exempt), unless otherwise stated.
- Care should be taken to comply with all information displayed on the mooring buoy and tag.
- It is an offence to remove, misuse or engage in conduct that results in damage to a public mooring.

How to pick up a mooring

When picking up a public mooring:

- take note of the prevailing wind and tides. Approach the mooring buoy by motoring into the wind or tide (whichever is stronger)
- take care to avoid running over the pick-up line when approaching the mooring

Public moorings are generally located near shallow reefs or shorelines. Care should be taken approaching and leaving buoys, particularly when mooring in poor weather, reduced visibility or at night.

- use a boat hook to retrieve the pick-up line
- observe the colour-coded band on the buoy and the mooring tag attached to the pick-up line for information on the limits of use
- attach the mooring eye to a cleat or strong point on the bow of the vessel and ensure the line is not rubbing on any abrasive surfaces.

How to drop a mooring

When dropping a public mooring:

- motor slowly towards the mooring to slacken the line slightly
- cast the mooring pick-up lines well clear of the vessel
- reverse away from the mooring buoy and line.



Protecting coral

The Great Barrier Reef and its island national parks are home to abundant and diverse marine life, attracting thousands of visitors each year. Corals are among the most popular attractions, yet they are the most vulnerable.

Coral reefs can be damaged by:

- a vessel's anchor and chain dropping or dragging on coral
- a vessel grounding when the wind changes or the tide ebbs
- a chain or rope wrapping around coral or breaking pieces off.

It may take many years for coral to recover. Some coral never returns to its original condition.

It is an offence to damage coral in the Great Barrier Reef and Great Barrier Reef Coast marine parks.



Anchor chains damage coral; Staghorn coral broken by anchor.

Photo: Chris Jones © GBRMPA

Reef protection areas

The Great Barrier Reef contains many well-developed fringing reefs that are particularly vulnerable to anchor damage. To protect these highly diverse coral communities, there are reef protection areas where anchoring is not allowed. All no-anchoring areas in the Keppels and Capricorn Bunkers are marked by reef protection markers.

Reef protection markers indicating no-anchoring areas are easily identified by their white, pyramid-shaped buoys with a blue label (joined with an imaginary line).

Never anchor on the reef flat inshore of the buoys or inside the line of buoys. You can anchor directly on the beach provided there are no tidal restrictions. Please note that reef protection markers must not be used as a mooring.



Reef protection marker


Anchor with care outside reef protection markers

Please ensure you follow best environmental practices when anchoring.

- Carry enough chain, or chain and line, for the water depth.
- Anchor in sand or mud away from corals.
- Motor towards the anchor while retrieving it. If the anchor is stuck, motor the vessel above and slightly ahead of the anchor before retrieval.
- Anchor far enough outside the line of reef protection markers to ensure all parts of the anchor chain and rope remain outside the line of markers should the vessel swing.

Marked reef protection areas in the Keppels and Capricorn Bunkers are located at:

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| • Sloping island | • Wilson Island |
| • Barren Island | • Heron Island |
| • Big Peninsula (Great Keppel Island) | • Fitzroy Reef |
| • Shelving Beach (Great Keppel Island) | • Lady Musgrave Island |
| • Monkey Beach (Great Keppel Island) | • Lady Elliot Island |
| • Humpy Island | • Pancake Creek |

 Never anchor on the reef flat inshore of reef protection markers.

Reef under pressure

The Great Barrier Reef is an irreplaceable icon and one of the world's best managed marine areas. It offers visitors stunning vistas, both above and below the water, but it contains some very fragile environments which are under pressure from growing threats.

Combined, these threats weaken the resilience of the Reef and affect its ability to recover from serious disturbances, such as mass coral bleaching events, which are predicted to become increasingly frequent.

Dropping an anchor on coral can take seconds to damage or destroy it. Under ideal circumstances, it may take years for the coral to rebuild. In some cases, the coral may never return to its former glory.

By taking a little extra care when anchoring and using public moorings, where available, you will help protect this diverse and remarkable natural wonder.

How can you help to protect the Reef?

By minimising your impact in the marine park, you can help the Reef withstand the stress of accumulated threats, such as climate change.

While using public moorings and anchoring away from coral are two key actions, here are some more ways you can help to #LovetheReef.

- Anonymously report suspected illegal fishing activity to 24-hour hotline: **1800 380 048** or **www.gbrmpa.gov.au/report-an-incident**
- Check your zoning maps, available free at **www.gbrmpa.gov.au**—know where you're going and what's allowed.
- Use a GPS and cross-check it with your zoning map.
- Avoid taking herbivorous fish like parrotfish, which remove seaweed and provide space for new corals to grow.
- Use and understand best snorkelling practices, such as not touching or standing on corals.
- Take all rubbish with you and put into bins on the shore.

Public moorings and anchoring in the southern Great Barrier Reef

Protecting coral in the Keppels and Capricorn Bunkers



Use moorings when available to protect the Reef.

Photo: Maxime Coquard
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Further information

For Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) enquiries, please visit us at qld.gov.au/NationalParks

This brochure is also available at qld.gov.au/ParkBrochures

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

280 Flinders St, Townsville

PO Box 1379, Townsville Qld 4810

Phone: 1800 990 177

Email: info@gbmpa.gov.au

Web: www.gbmpa.gov.au



Please report any misused or damaged public moorings on 13 QGOV (13 74 68).



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Keppel islands moorings

LOCATION	Mooring class	Max. vessel length	Installed latitude GDA94 ddm	Installed longitude GDA94 ddm
Bald Rock	A	10m	23° 10.210'S	150° 59.561'E
Barren Island	A	10m	23° 09.295'S	151° 04.484'E
	B	20m	23° 09.448'S	151° 04.290'E
Big Peninsula	B	20m	23° 08.986'S	150° 58.419'E
Man and Wife Rocks	B	20m	23° 06.973'S	150° 59.495'E
Monkey Beach	A	10m	23° 11.658'S	150° 56.186'E
	B	20m	23° 11.693'S	150° 56.171'E
Outer Rock	A	10m	23° 03.757'S	150° 57.119'E
Shelving Beach	A	10m	23° 11.272'S	150° 56.025'E
Sloping Island	B	20m	23° 05.875'S	150° 53.888'E



Coral reef, Barron Island (above); Reef protection marker and public mooring buoy, Sloping Island (right).



Capricorn Bunker Group moorings

CAPRICORN BUNKER GROUP	Mooring class	Max. vessel length	Installed latitude GDA94 ddm	Installed longitude GDA94 ddm
Fitzroy Reef	B	20m	23° 36.913'S	152° 09.661'E
	B	20m	23° 36.885'S	152° 09.593'E
	B	20m	23° 36.934'S	152° 09.704'E
Heron Island	C	25m	23° 26.760'S	151° 54.592'E
Heron Reef	D	35m	23° 26.245'S	151° 58.860'E
Lady Elliot Island	B	20m	24° 06.905'S	152° 42.532'E
	B	20m	24° 06.443'S	152° 42.772'E
Lady Musgrave Island	A	10m	23° 54.263'S	152° 23.931'E
	A	10m	23° 54.302'S	152° 23.939'E
	B	20m	23° 54.289'S	152° 24.130'E
	B	20m	23° 54.313'S	152° 24.089'E
	B	20m	23° 54.297'S	152° 24.048'E
	B	20m	23° 53.404'S	152° 24.480'E
	C	25m	23° 54.253'S	152° 24.094'E
Mast Head Island	C	35m	23° 54.200'S	152° 24.224'E
	C	25m	23° 31.931'S	151° 43.381'E
North West Island	C	25m	23° 17.381'S	151° 41.921'E
	C	25m	23° 16.964'S	151° 43.108'E
Pancake Creek	15	15m	24° 00.614'S	151° 44.255'E
	15	15m	24° 00.660'S	151° 44.229'E
	15	15m	24° 01.709'S	151° 44.590'E
	15	15m	24° 01.768'S	151° 44.587'E
	15	15m	24° 01.819'S	151° 44.585'E
	15	15m	24° 01.882'S	151° 44.582'E
Wilson Island	B	20m	23° 18.145'S	151° 54.799'E
Wistari Reef	C	25m	23° 26.942'S	151° 53.920'E

Disclaimer: The published positions are correct to the best of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service's knowledge at June 2018. No guarantee is given that the moorings are in the location shown in the table. Vessel skippers should verify the mooring positions with their own GPS equipment prior to attempting to access the moorings. Particular care should be taken in accessing the moorings in poor weather, reduced visibility or at night.

Reef protection marker, Wilson Island



Public moorings

Protecting the Reef

Colour code	Class	Max. vessel length		Max. wind speed
BROWN	T	6m (tender only)		24 knots
YELLOW	A	10m (monohull)	9m (multihull)	24 knots
GREEN	B	20m (monohull)	18m (multihull)	34 knots
BLUE	C	25m (monohull)	22m (multihull)	34 knots
RED	D	35m (monohull)	30m (multihull)	34 knots

www.gbrmpa.gov.au/visit-the-reef/moorings



Using public moorings

To protect fragile reefs in high-use areas, rules are in place to help stop misuse of public moorings and reef protection markers. While there have always been rules around the use of moorings, the rules have been updated to outline what is considered misuse of public moorings. This includes:

- exceeding time limits
- attaching more than one vessel to a public mooring
- rafting-up—attaching multiple vessels in a chain when one vessel is attached to the mooring
- altering the mooring
- not following the instructions on the mooring.

Location of Public Moorings and Reef Protection Areas in the Keppel Islands

150°55'0"E

151°0'0"E



Australian Government
Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority

151°5'0"E

23°0'0"S

23°5'0"S

Coral Sea



Outer (O-nun) Rocks

Outer Rock

Class of mooring	Maximum vessel length	Maximum wind speed
◆ T	6m - tender only	24 knots
◆ A	10m - monohull 9m - multihull	24 knots
◆ B	20m - monohull 18m - multihull	34 knots
◆ C	25m - monohull 22m - multihull	34 knots
◆ D	35m - monohull 30m - multihull	34 knots
△	Reef Protection Area (RPA)	

23°0'0"S

23°5'0"S

Location of Public Moorings and Reef Protection Areas in the Capricorn

23°0'0"S

23°5'0"S



North West Island

◆ 2 x C

Wilson Island

◆ 1 x B

△ RPA

Wistari Reef

◆ 1 x C

Erskine Island

These rules are to help make sure public moorings continue to be available for everyone's use. It's about playing fair while out on the water. Anyone found to be misusing a public mooring or public infrastructure may be issued with a penalty infringement notice.

Offences relating to the misuse of public moorings are outlined in Regulation 102 of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983.

Instructions to vessel masters

- 1. Vessel masters are solely responsible for the safety of their vessel while using the public moorings.
- 2. A watch must be kept at all times while the vessel is on the mooring.
- 3. Be aware of changing weather and sea conditions and your proximity to obstacles including coral and other vessels and how these may be affected by mooring swing.
- 4. Refer to instructions specified or included on the tag or buoy.



of Public Moorings and
Protection Areas
n Bunker Group and Coast



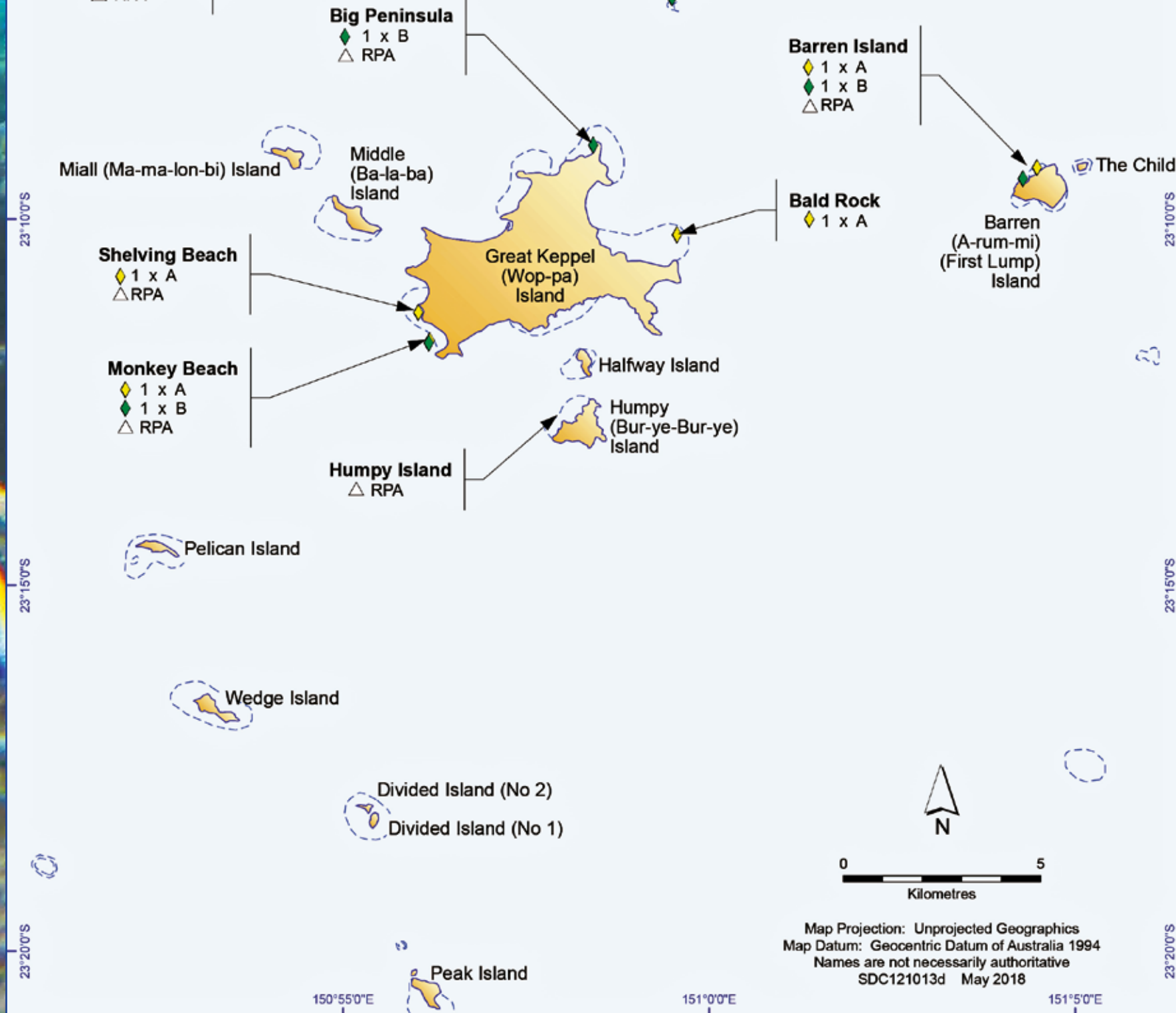
152°30'0"E

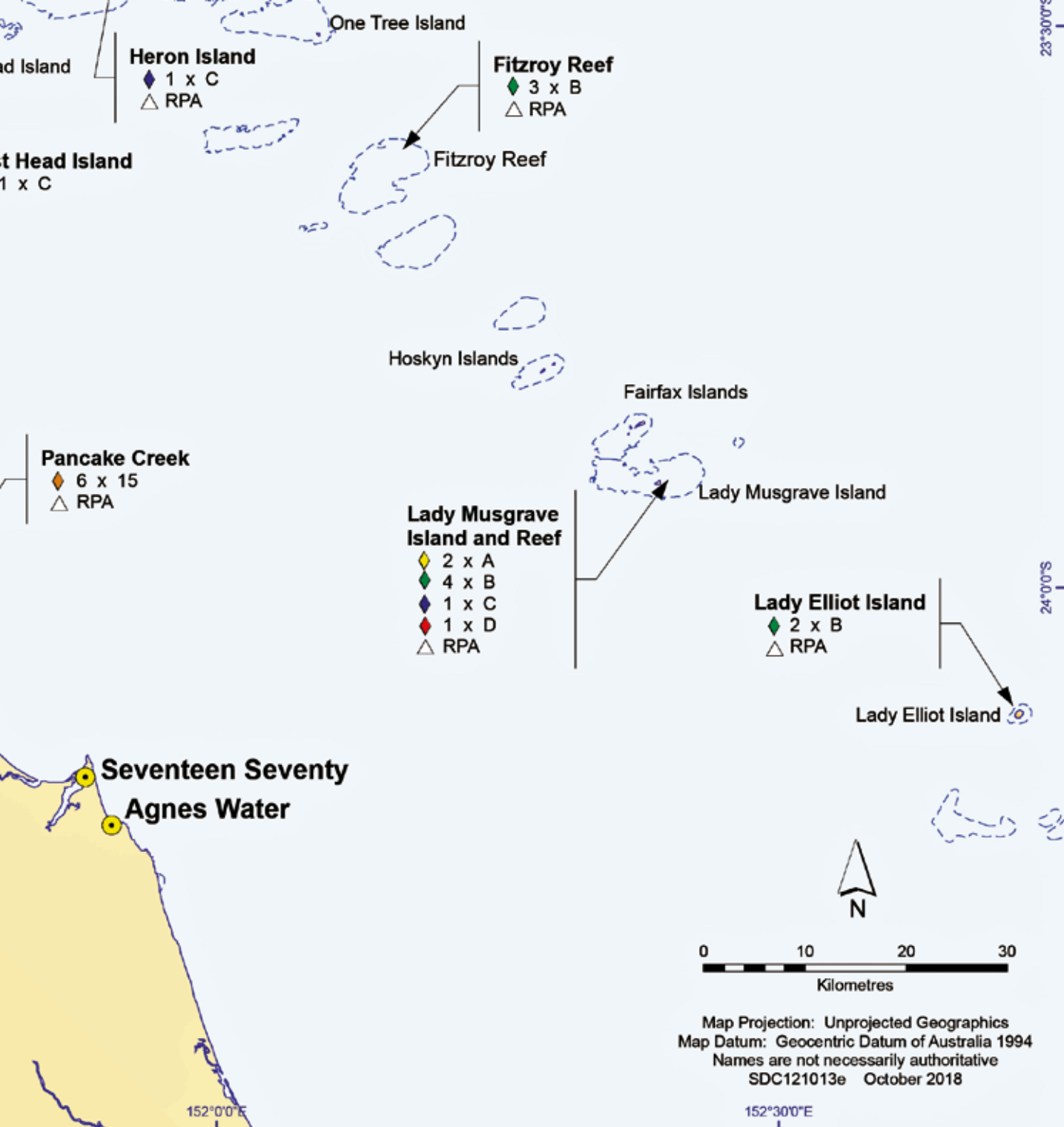
Australian Government
Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority

Class of mooring	Maximum vessel length	Maximum wind speed
◆ T	6m - tender only	24 knots
◆ A	10m - monohull 9m - multihull	24 knots
◆ 15	15m - monohull 15m - multihull	34 knots
◆ B	20m - monohull 18m - multihull	34 knots
◆ C	25m - monohull 22m - multihull	34 knots
◆ D	35m - monohull 30m - multihull	34 knots
△	Reef Protection Area (RPA)	



No-anchoring areas and public moorings help to protect fragile coral communities (top: North West Island, above: Lady Musgrave Island).
Photos: Collette Bagnato © Qld Govt (top);
© Lise Pedersen (above).





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 Maps: © GBRMPA